

ROY CARTER

IN YOUR LETTER YOU ASKED FOR MY 12/7/41 EXPERIENCES OR REMARKS. I JOINED THE NAVY IN 1938 AFTER MY HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION. LIKE MANY OTHERS, AT THAT TIME, I COULD NOT GET A DECENT JOB. SO I JOINED THE NAVY TO "SEE THE WORLD", BUT MAINLY TO SAVE A LITTLE MONEY FOR COLLEGE. BY 12/7/41 I HAD ROUGHLY 3 1/2 YEARS OF SERVICE. ON THIS DAY WE HAD FINISHED BREAKFAST AND DUE TO THE UPCOMING INSPECTION I WAS REPLACING MY CLOTHES IN MY LOCKER. MY RATING AT THAT TIME WAS CM2c IN THE "R" DIVISION. THE "R" DIVISION WAS COMPOSED OF SHIPFITTERS AND CARPENTERS. THIS WAS THE DAMAGE CONTROL DIVISION. MY BATTLE STATION WAS IN THE CARPENTER SHOP, WHICH WAS ON THE 3rd DECK AFT AS FAR AS YOU COULD BE. THE FIRST I HEARD WAS "ALL HANDS MAN YOUR BATTLE STATIONS-AIR ATTACK-NO SHIT"! NEXT WAS SET CONDITION ZED WHICH IS NO ZULA. I IMMEDIATELY RAN TO CLOSE A WATER TIGHT HATCH AND A WATER-TIGHT DOOR. THE HATCH AND DOOR CLOSED OFF AFTER STEERING, OR THE QUARTER MASTERS AREA IN THE "N" DIVISION.

AS I STARTED TO CLOSE THE HATCH MICHAEL "MIKE" STECZ CAME UP THE LADDER AND SAID TO ME, "LET ME BY I HAVE TO GO TO MY BATTLE STATION". I LET HIM BY AND IMMEDIATELY CLOSED THE HATCH. THIS HATCH WAS SPRING LOADED FOR EASY CLOSING AND OPENING, AND COULD ONLY BE OPENED FROM ITS TOP SIDE. ONCE CLOSED THOSE IN STEERING AFT COULD NOT GET OUT. THERE WERE 6 OR 7 MEN IN AFTER STEERING WHO WERE CUT OUT FROM THE BOTTOM, SOEM 32 HOURS LATER. SOME OF THE NAMES WERE "BUD" KENNEDY A PERSONAL FRIEND, JIM BOUNDS, AND A FELLOW ABBY THE NAME OF LONG AND THREE OR FOUR OTHERS. I, AT ONE TIME KNEW THE NAMES BUT NOW I DO NOT RECALL THEIR NAMES.

AS SOON AS I HAD CLOSED THE HATCH AND WATER TIGHT DOOR WE LOST ALL LIGHT AND COMMUNICATIONS. LUMBER WE USED IN THE CARPENTER SHOP WAS STORED IN OVER HEAD RACKS AND AS THE OKIE TURNED THE LUMBER WAS FALLING, MAKING A LOT OF NOISE. LUCKY FOR THOSE IN THE AFT DAMAGE CONTROL STATION AND BECAUSE OF THE UPCOMING ADMIRALS INSPECTION ALL HATCHES WERE OPEN TO THE TOP SIDE, AT LEAST IN THE AFT PART OF THE SHIP. THERE WAS A TRUNK JUST AFT OF TURRET #4 USED TO LOWER AMMUNITION. THIS WAS THE AVENUE OF ESCAPE FOR US.

WE NEVER HEARD "ABANDON SHIP" I WAS THE LAST ONE OUT OF THE CARPENTER SHOP. THERE WAS A YOUNG SAILOR WHO WAS IN THE BRIG WHO CLAIMS HE WAS THE LAST ONE OUT. MARINE GUARD LET THIS SAILOR OUT OF THE BRIG ABOUT THE TIME I WAS CLOSING THE HATCH AND WATER TIGHT DOOR TO AFTER STEERING. BY THE TIME I STARTED TO LEAVE THE 3rd DECK. THE BULKHEADS WERE LIKE A DECK. I CRAWLED TO GET OUT AND JUST AS I REACH TOP SIDE WATER STARTED TO RUSH DOWN THIS TRUNK AND AS THE SHIP ROLLED OVER I WAS PULLED UNDER. I CAME UP COUGHING AND SPITTING OIL AS SOON AS I COULD I SWAM UNDER THE OIL TOWARDS THE MIDDLE OF THE CHANNEL. TO A MOTOR LAUNCH THAT WAS FILLING QUICKLY WITH OTHER SAILORS. BEFORE INTO THE MOTOR LAUNCH AND TRYING TO LOOK AROUND AN UP. I SAW 5 HIGH LEVEL BOMBERS. THEY DROPPED THE BOMBS AND I THOUGHT THESE BOMBS WERE GOING TO HIT ME. LUCK WAS WITH ME AND MANY OTHERS AS THESE BOMBS HIT THE WATER- NONE EXPLODED. ALL FIVE OF THE BOMBS WERE ABOUT EVEN TO THE ARIZONA. AND MY ESTIMATE OF 500 TO 1000 YARDS OUT FROM THE ARIZONA.

NOW BACK TO THE MOTOR LAUNCH- SOME ONE STARTED THE MOTOR AND SOMEONE TOOK THE TILLER AND WE THEN WENT TO THE SUB BASE. THE FIRST THING WAS THE SHOWER TO REMOVE THE OIL FROM MY BODY. CARBON TETRACHLORIDE WAS USED TO "DEGREASE" ME A CORPS MAN PUT DROPS IN MY EYES AND IT MUST HAVE BEEN A MEDICATION TO DILATE EYES BECAUSE MY EYES WERE DILATED FOR SEVERAL DAYS. I WAS ISSUED A PAIR OF DUNGAREES, AS SHIRT, SHOES SHORTS AND A TEE SHIRT. THEY GAVE OUT OFFICERS BLANKETS TO ALL OF US. I STILL HAVE THAT BLANKET. THAT NIGHT MANY OF US SLEPT ON THE FLOOR IN THE BOWLING ALLEY. NEXT THING I WAS ASSIGNED TO THE USS PELIAS A SUB TENDER.

THIS IS MY REMARKS, BUT IN CLOSING, THOSE FIVE BOMBS ARE PROBABLY STILL IN THE MUD IN PEARL

PAUL, I BELIEVE GEORGE DeLONG WAS ONE OF THOSE DOGGED DOWN IN AFTER STEERING, ARTLEY IS ANOTHER - SORRY I CANT RECALL THOSE OF OUR OKLAHOMA CREW WHO WERE IN THE AFTER STEERING OTHER THAN THOSE NAMED HERE AND EARLIER IN MY REMARKS.

P.S. I BELIEVE THERE ARE ONLY TWO OF US FROM THE "R" DIVISION STILL LIVING - ED BAUMGART AND ME

THE ONES THAT I DOGGED DOWN IN AFTER STEERING LIVED TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY. I MY OPINION HAD THEY NOT BEEN SEALED BELOW DECK, THEY PROBABLY WOULD HAVE BEEN KILLED LIKE THE 429 OF OUR SHIPMATES. THEY SUFFERED FOR 32 HOURS BUT THEY LIVED

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